

JBA
||
||
||
||
||
||

Project Summary for Mini-Grant

July 26, 2010

Project Title:

Rain Barrels for Garden Buddies

School / Organization and Teacher / Leader's Name:

Mike Mullins, Director, Boys and Girls Club

Gary Wright, Newport News Master Gardeners

Project Outcome:

Although our project ran a little behind schedule, the rain barrels are now completed and being used by the "garden buddies" at the Boys and Girls Club to water the garden and learn about water conservation.

We completed installation of the rain barrels in early June. This included installing gutters, downspouts, three rain barrels, connections to link the barrels together, and a wooden stand to support and safely secure the barrels.

The kids have been using the rain barrels since the Boys and Girls Club summer program began on June 21. The kids that wish to participate in the "garden buddies" program meet and work in the garden at the club for one hour each Monday and Friday throughout the summer. Although the individual kids can vary from week to week, approximately 15 to 20 kids participate each day. The rain barrels will also be used in our fall and spring programs at the club.

The kids have learned how rain barrels can be used to save water, reduce pollution, save money, and help the plants. During each session, the kids love to use their watering pails to collect water from the rain barrels and distribute it to the corn, tomatoes, green beans, squash, and other vegetables in the garden. Since each rain barrel has a separate faucet, all kids have the opportunity to water the plants.

As volunteers, we have learned a great deal about constructing rain barrels for use with children. For example, our rain barrel stand had to be strong, since it must support and safely secure three barrels which weigh over 1500 pounds when full of water. The stand, rain barrels, and connections must also be sturdy and "kid resistant" since kids may climb on the stand and barrels.

Volunteer Participation:

The Newport News Master Gardeners provide 2-4 volunteers each Monday and Friday throughout the summer to work with the kids in the garden. On average, each volunteer spends 2-3 hours in the garden on Monday and Friday. This includes preparation and clean up time. Since the summer program runs for 10 weeks (from June 21 to August 27), the volunteers work for a total of approximately 400 hours each summer. These hours do not include hours spent planning, constructing, and installing the rain barrels which required approximately 120 additional hours of volunteer time.

RECEIVED

JUL 27 2010

HRPDC 1

What students enjoyed the most:

Although the kids enjoy everything about the garden, with regards to the rain barrels, they really enjoy using their watering pails to collect water from the rain barrels and distributing it to the plants. Since this is a very hot summer, the rain water is greatly needed. The kids also have a lot of fun, and as expected, not all the water makes it to the plants. The rain barrels help keep all the kids actively involved in the garden and give them a “hands on” opportunity to conserve water and help the garden. They also get a sense of accomplishment and feel that they each are doing their part.

How a similar project could be improved:

One of the hardest things to do was to construct a stand for the rain barrels that was sturdy enough to support the extreme weight and safe enough to secure the barrels so the kids cannot tip them over or damage the faucets and connections. The design we used for the stand and the rain barrels might prove useful to other similar projects where kids are involved. For example, the design might be useful for a community garden project now being planned at another Boys and Girls Club in Newport News.

Receipts:

Following is a summary of materials used for the project and associated costs. Receipts for all materials are attached.

Date	Materials	Cost
03/23/10	Gutters & Downspout materials	101.36
03/30/10	Three plastic barrels (formerly used for olives)	31.50
04/05/10	Treated lumber for stand	38.60
04/12/10	Spray paint for barrels	29.62
04/15/10	“	4.56
04/19/10	Faucets & hardware for connections	48.00
04/08/10	“	17.99
04/20/10	Hardware	4.10
04/23/10	Treated lumber for stand	55.91
04/18/10	Paints & brushes for kids to paint barrels	4.97
04/16/10	“	4.00
04/14/10	“	33.31
04/16/10	“	1.00
05/27/10	Hardware	9.10
06/08/10	Treated lumber	8.34
06/10/10	Hardware & markers	7.53
06/12/10	Downspout & connector & screws	25.99
06/16/10	Watering pails	11.28
07/21/10	Sign	26.25
07/24/10	Overflow hose, clamp, replacement flex spout	24.79
07/24/10	Two soaker hoses	13.27
	TOTAL	501.47

Photos:

Following are rain barrel project photos taken at the Boys and Girls Club. Digital copies of these and additional pictures can be provided if needed.



Master Gardener volunteer helping kids get started with painting the barrels.



Mixing paints



Painting rain barrels



Volunteer assisting.



Volunteer building rain barrel stand.



Volunteer with stand under construction.



Finished rain barrels at Boys & Girls Club



Rain barrel faucets



Garden Buddies using rain barrels to water garden



Using rain barrels



Using rain barrels



Garden Buddy with pumpkin